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Introduction

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) supports the UK government's wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK. The UKSPF is a £2.6 billion Fund designed to succeed and improve upon EU structural funds. The UKSPF is not a direct replacement for EU structural funds. It improves on these funds by:

- focusing on UK priorities rather than policies dictated by the EU
- giving local areas a greater say in investments, by giving more direct accountability to elected local leaders

Money is distributed to places based on a funding allocation for 3 years. As a delegated fund, places empowered to identify and build on their own strengths and needs at a local level, focused on building pride in place and increasing life chances, and delivered through 3 investment priorities: **Communities and Place, Local Businesses and People & Skills.**

Communities and place:

Objectives:

- Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.
- Building resilient, safe and healthy neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.

Supporting local business:

Objectives:

- Creating jobs and boosting community cohesion, through investments that build on existing industries and institutions, and range from support for starting businesses to visible improvements to local retail, hospitality and leisure sector facilities.
- Promoting networking and collaboration, through interventions that bring together businesses and partners within and across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth.
- Increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses to undertake new-to-firm innovation,

adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques, and start or grow their exports.

People and skills:

Objectives:

- Boosting core skills and support adults to progress in work, by targeting adults with no or low-level qualifications and skills in maths, and upskill the working population, yielding personal and societal economic impact, and by encouraging innovative approaches to reducing adult learning barriers.
- Reducing levels of economic inactivity [footnote 1] through investment in bespoke intensive life and employment support tailored to local need. Investment should facilitate the join-up of mainstream provision and local services within an area for participants, through the use of one-to-one keyworker support, improving employment outcomes for specific cohorts who face labour market barriers.
- Expected cohorts include, but are not limited to people aged over 50, people with a disability and health condition, women, people from an ethnic minority, young people not in education, employment or training and people with multiple complex needs (homeless, care leavers, ex/ offenders, people with substance abuse problems and victims of domestic violence).
- Supporting people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support, including access to basic skills.
- Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work, and supplement local adult skills provision e.g. by providing additional volumes; delivering provision through wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification based and non-qualification based. This should be supplementary to provision available through national employment and skills programmes.

Reports submitted to committee

A report went to CPRC in July 2022 which agreed the programme of projects and the financial split (see below).

[Agenda for Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on Monday, 11 July 2022, 7.00 pm - Spelthorne Borough Council](#) (item 73/22)

Application	Summary of project	Funding
Youth Hub	Support young people aged 18 – 24 – training opportunities, apprenticeship, help to get into education, workshops, work experience	£225k over 3 years 2022/23 - £25k 2023/24 - £100k 2024/25 - £100k
Bounce Back Street	Help unemployed low skilled older residents through a training programme, prepare them for the work market and help them to gain employment	£121.5k over 3 years 2022/23 - £13.5k 2023/24 - £54k 2024/25 - £54k
Business – growth	1-2-1 business advice, enhance skill set of business owners, increased business turnover, increased receipt of innovation grants	£154.7k over 3 years 2022/23 - £8.8k 2023/24 - £37.9k 2024/25 - £108k
Urban garden & food growth	'Incredible edible' network – education re food and transformation of areas into greener spaces, healthy lifestyles	£15k over 2 years 2022/23 - £13k 2023/24 - £2k 2024/25 - £0k
Climate change audit for businesses	Analysis of a business: energy usage, water usage, fuel usage and material usage – greener solution and reduced costs	£100k over 3 years 2022/23 - £30k 2023/24 - £35k 2024/25 - £35k
Upskill communities	To ensure community and voluntary groups gain confidence and are upskilled in order to	£83k over 3 years 2022/23 - £20k

to access grants	submit more successful bids to secure funding (i.e. Your Surrey fund)	2023/24 - £20k 2024/25 - £43k
Cultural kick starter Oast House consortium	Utilise the Oast House building in Staines-upon-Thames as a cultural facility, as well as a programme of community outreach in education and skills development.	£185k (£175k in year 3) 2022/23 - £10k 2023/24 - £0k 2024/25 - £175k
Cultural kick starter Community Hub	Utilise empty shopping units in Staines for youth engagement activity (skills development/cultural opportunities) and undertake outreach activities across the borough.	£105k over 3 years 2022/23 - £20k 2023/24 - £20k 2024/25 - £65k

Unfortunately, during the process, the government changed the financial goalposts which backloaded the £1m fund so that 88% of it is delivered in 2024/25.

CPRC received a further report in October 2022 where they agreed that notwithstanding the re-profiling of the receipt of monies it was still critical to deliver the original programme to the original timetable. It was therefore agreed that the business rates retention fund reserves would be used to ensure all the projects were carried forward. DLUHC were aware that this is our intention and have advised that this was acceptable.

[Agenda for Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on Monday, 10 October 2022, 7.00 pm - Spelthorne Borough Council](#) (item 112.22)

Funding approved by DLUHC

DLUHC approved the following funding:

Project	Priorities	Total	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25
Bounce Back Street and Youth Hub	People & Skills	£351,300	£0	£0	£351,300
Business Growth	Local Business	£154,700	£8,800	£37,900	£108,000
Urban garden and food growth	Communities & place	£14,600	£4,000	£4,000	£6,600
Climate Change Audit	Local Business	£101,600	£10,000	£17,000	£74,600
Upskill communities	Communities & place	£84,600	£7,186	£10,535	£66,879
Oast House and Cultural kick starter	Communities & place	£293,200	£10,000	£10,536	£272,664
		£1,000,000	£39,986	£79,971	£880,043

Benefits DLUHC have identified the projects will impact and deliver on are stated as interventions.

Project Name	Intervention
Bounce Back Street and Youth Hub	E33: Employment support for economically inactive people
Business Growth	E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems
Urban garden and food growth	E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces
Climate Change Audit	E29: Supporting decarbonisation & improving natural environment
Upskill communities	E11: Capacity building & infrastructure support local groups
Oast House and Cultural kick starter	E4: Enhancing existing cultural, historic & heritage institutions offer

Update on project progress by Project Managers

Bounce Back Street and Youth Hub:

Project will provide for foundation course, links young unemployed with employers, levers in apprenticeship levy to help people into work.

June 2023:

Secured tenancy on current building and leasing the shop in the Elmsleigh Centre from November paying full rent and service charge. New works coach supervisor started 1st June, another starting in the next two weeks, a third will be going from temp to perm July 23. Posts have been covered by banks and temp staff in the interim.

September 2023:

2 work coaches employed, 1 more work coach being recruited, team of volunteers providing support to work coaches, Retention jobs fare held, 'Better futures' program kick-started in conjunction with Dnata, 'I choose local scheme' launch in next few months, Jobs board for local jobs set up, bespoke 1-to-1 training for over 45s set up.

Business Growth:

Businesses will be supported with the development of Business Growth Plans and access to innovation grants. The project will lever in support from Royal Holloway University and the LEP, providing local businesses with access to RHUL's research and innovation, knowledge transfer programmes through their Enterprise Hub, and the LEPS package of free business coaching to high growth businesses, access to specialist sector support and referral pathways to Innovate UK and other programmes to support growth and innovation.

This project would be delivered in partnership with Runnymede Borough Council which will allow potential savings through economy of scale as well as cross-fertilise businesses through opportunities provided for businesses from both Boroughs to network together and share ideas.

The funding would pay for the provision of a business coaching company to provide expert advice and support for small and medium sized businesses. Each borough would be allotted 1 day a week to channel businesses for 1-to-1 mentorship and support, with multiple sessions available for each business.

There would also be £80k available per Borough to provide innovation grants between 2023 and 2025. Access to that grant would be via the business 1-1 support scheme where the operator appointed would evaluate the strength of the business applying and having carried out due diligence through checks on bank statements / Companies House etcetera, make a recommendation for an innovation grant for consideration by the relevant Borough.

June 2023:

Tender pack was released on Monday and start date is 1st September.

September 2023:

CPG awarded contract. Research phase initiated, courses being designed, course literature being developed, designing marketing literature, launch expected next month for businesses.

Urban garden and food growth:

The allocation of funds to enable Spelthorne borough council (SBC) to be an actor in the creation and adoption of a community urban garden and food growth project in association with Spelthorne based volunteer group Talking Tree.

The project would build on the existing 'Incredible Edible' network. Incredible edible is an organisation that enables communities to implement community led food growing patches, provides education as to the importance of locally grown produce and aids in transforming urban landscapes into greener, more practical spaces.

It will enable local people of all ages and abilities to volunteer and get involved in growing fresh produce right in the urban centres and community hubs of Spelthorne. The benefits of this on the local community could be profound.

The project's funds would help support the sourcing of physical infrastructure. This will primarily consist of wooden planters placed in urban centres, community centres and schools. In addition to these planters will be the equipment required to tend to the gardens such as trowels and forks, coupled with all the seeds and saplings for garden growth. Talking Tree would be the actor responsible for management of the project.

Additionally, it would support talks and events detailing the benefits of locally grown produce on the environment, economy and society. Implementation of urban community led food gardens would benefit both local communities and the continued positive evolution of urban spaces in Spelthorne. Community workshop on Tuesday the 7th of March, more information following this meeting will be available.

June 2023:

Community Group has been established, site for first urban food garden secured, site clearance starting mid-June funding will be required for planters, tools, soil and plants.

September 2023:

Project Manager changed. New project manager to join in mid-September to carry project forward.

Climate Change Audit:

The conducting of an audit of climate change impacting activities within SMEs within the borough. Working with a contractor, each business will receive a 1 to 1 meetings and site visit where energy, water, fuel and bills are reviewed to assess the usages. Recommendations will be given, and the overall data will be shared with SBC economic development team to aid in the direction of future funding activities.

June 2023:

3 contractors have been identified and met. An identical project brief has been shared with each, we are now awaiting the proposals of which will be scored against a set of criteria, to be determined.

September 2023:

Decision was made to go for a full-fledged procurement process given the value of the contract. Currently undergoing tendering process which should be completed by the end of the month.

Upskill communities:

Following initial meetings with VSNS they have initiated the process of recruiting a dedicated Fundraising and Grant Application Advisor for Spelthorne. The deadline for applications was the 12 June 2023. There was limited interest, and they are looking to extend the deadline to 3rd July to ensure they get the right candidate. It's hoped the successful candidate will be in post in the next couple of months. We are also in the process of drawing up and SLA with Legal services.

Solette Sheppardson, Chief Executive of VSNS, said of the initiative "To the best of my knowledge SBC are the only boroughs and districts that have directly shared prosperity funding with the Voluntary Sector. I would like to express my gratitude to the council for your commitment to the Sector and supporting local voluntary organisations in this way."

September 2023:

VSNS are advertised the post having not found a suitable candidate the first time around. They have had a lot more interest the second time and are in the process of conducting interviews.

Oast House and Cultural kick starter:

Oast House:

June 2023:

Following the recent local election the report looking at options for the future of the Grade II listed Oast House has been put back to a committee meeting in July and may be subsequently deferred to the subsequent meeting subject to further consultation with the Chair of CPRC.

The report sets out three options incorporating differing mixes of commercial and community-based space and seeks the permission of the committee to go out to public consultation. The intention is that the outcome of the consultation will be reported back to CPRC who would then advise on the preferred option at which stage a business case would be developed. The £10,000 SPF allocation in year 1 will be used to help pay for the consultation and consultant fees to develop the business case.

September 2023:

On the 11 September, in response to rising interest rates and significant construction inflation, the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee voted to suspend Spelthorne Borough Council's housing development programme.

The development of the grade II listed Oast House was intended to be funded in part by the wider residential development of the Kingston Road site. As such the CPRC report mentioned in June 2023 has been put on hold along with the project for the time being.

The listed building is not watertight, and investment is required in any event to ensure that it doesn't deteriorate further over the winter.

Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) monies could potentially be re-allocated to assist with these costs; however, this would ultimately need to be approved by Members and DULHC and demonstrate how this will benefit the wider community in the long run. A commitment to use the building for the benefit of the wider community may be sufficient to satisfy this.

We are also currently exploring alternative grant funding routes to redevelop the listed building. Officers have met with Arts Council England (ACE). Whilst there are funds available for capital projects, these projects can take a number of years to come to fruition and are usually with arts organisations that have an established and demonstratable relationship with ACE already.

ACE have identified Spelthorne as a priority area and a separate SPF allocation is being used specifically to help develop the arts locally. Whilst we remain hopeful that we will be able to secure grant funding in the long run it is increasingly unlikely that this will be able to be taken forward in the time frames set out in the Shared Prosperity Fund bid (by end March 2025).

Cultural Kickstarter:

June 2023:

To get the ball rolling we met with Surrey Arts, Staines BID, and have committed a portion of funding to put on the following events. We intend to consult visitors to these events to inform the programme of activities going forward. A bottom-up rather than top-down approach to ensure we deliver artistic activities that people want to engage with:

- Following a consultation exercise with young people from the Phoenix Project £2,012 has been committed to fund an artist, Becci Kenning (Art in Transit), to work with 15 young people over two dates to create an art installation which will be displayed as part of the Surrey Youth Arts and Culture Festival referenced below. The young people taking part come from Ashford Youth Club and the theme of the installation will be about 'Where is it we are seeking to go' literally or figuratively. What 'direction' are our young people seeking? Their destinations will be part of a large colourful totem inspired signpost.
- £4,000 match funding to organise a Youth Arts event on Saturday 1 July in Staines. The festival is a partnership event in collaboration with Surrey Arts and Surrey Library Service (both part of SCC), Visit Staines (Staines BID), The Elmsleigh Centre, Spelthorne Youth Hub. I've attached the press release for the festival. The festival includes free "have a go" activities

including: Djing, Stop motion animation, Dance, Music, Art, Fashion, Textiles, Acting, Gaming, Creative Writing, Clay modelling and more. The event is supported by University of Surrey, University of Creative Arts, Pinewood Film Studios, Amazon Film Studios, CCSkills, Royal Holloway University and will also include talks by artists and authors and musicians.

In the lead up to the event Surrey Arts have also been visiting local schools to deliver assemblies to talk about the importance of art and culture and the positive health benefits they have as well as possible career paths that the arts can lead to:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/culture-and-leisure/culture/festivals>

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/culture-and-leisure/culture/festivals/staines>

- £4,000 match funding to fund an Outdoor Theatre Season in Staines Town Centre:

https://www.visitstaines.co.uk/event_category/outdoor-theatre/

As of 6 June, the following tickets had been booked:

- A Bee Story, 29
- We All Wobble, 24
- Peter Rabbit, 32
- Wind in the Willows, 32
- Gravity and Circus Skills are non-ticketed.

Against an initial outlay of £10,012 we have drawn in match funding of £8,000.

Looking forward I'm also considering two other initiatives the first to extend dance classes for children that took part in the Specsavers Surrey Youth Games (SSYG). The SSYG adopted a new direction in 2022 with the aim of targeting the most deprived children and inactive participants, aiming to inspire a lifelong interest in sport and physical activity, hence why it now includes dance.

Funding for Craft Club outreach classes at community centres including Stanwell Events. These are also building on relationships built with the library service who will provide literacy packs at these sessions too. Proposals for both these initiatives are being prepared by my team.

September 2023:

The Summer activities proved a great success.

The Surrey Youth Arts and Culture Festival was well received. The Festival took place on Saturday 3 July. This was a partnership initiative with Surrey Arts, Staines BID, Spelthorne Youth Hub and Surrey Libraries.

Over the course of the day some 230 young people took part in a range of free activities and talks introducing them to opportunities in the creative industries.

An assessment of the event is currently being produced to help inform future initiatives. We intend to explore the possibility of repeating the event in 2024.

The Open Air Theatre season put on in partnership with Visit Staines (Staines BID) had some 900 free tickets to performances and "sold" 892. Many more people came and watched from outside the perimeter and where there was capacity, they were allowed in. Add in the non-ticketed events with Motionhouse and Patches Circus Skills and this figure is closer to 1500. The initiative has helped us to establish strong collaborative partnership with Visit Staines and we are exploring the possibility of collaborating on future arts and culture initiatives.

To this end we have agreed to contribute £2,000 towards a Christmas parade and Carol concert as part of their winter programming. These align closely with the council's and intended use of the Shared Prosperity Fund allocation aims and objectives of showcasing local arts and engaging people with them, bringing the community together and providing activities for a range of ages. This is part of a wider programme of cultural events that they are seeking funding and sponsorship for adding to the local offer. Detail of additional funding this has helped to attract will be captured in due course.

In June we reported that on the back of the success of the dance classes put on as part of Specsavers Surrey Youth Games we were considering using SPF to fund the continuation of the classes in Stanwell. This was subsequently approved.

The Dance classes can take up to 26 in each class and there are two sessions a week at Stanwell Youth Centre catering for different age groups on the same evening. The funding has enabled the project to secure additional match funding from DCMS Million Hours Fund that will enable the initiative to run throughout the year with a break for Christmas. The classes will run every week for two years.

Our new Arts and Cultural Development Manager joined the team at the start of July 2023 and has made an immediate impact.

She has been busy building links with local arts groups and partners including Shepperton Studios, Spelthorne Youth Hub, Staines BID, local arts groups and schools. She is also working towards re-establishing a Spelthorne Arts Partnership and she has implemented an arts consultation to gauge the views of residents.

The results of the arts consultation will be used to inform an arts strategy going forward as well as identifying the types of projects that communities want to see. This will in turn inform the programme of activities that we work in partnership to put on over the remaining term of the SPF funding up to March 2025.

We have also:

- engaged with Arts Council England and are in discussions with them to identify projects and secure additional funding going forward.
- Initiated talks to introduce an arts trail across the borough